

SUGGESTED METHODS TO GUARD AGAINST ODOMETER TAMPERING

- ✓ Look for loose screws or scratch marks around the dashboard.
- ✓ Check to make sure that the digits in the odometer are lined up straight --particularly the 10,000 digit. On General Motors cars, look for silver between the digits -- it should not be there. The area between the numbers should be black.
- ✓ Test drive the car and see if the speedometer sticks.
- ✓ Check for service stickers inside the door or under the hood that may give the actual mileage.
- ✓ Look in the owner's manual to see if maintenance was listed, or if pages that might have shown high mileage were removed.
- ✓ Ask the dealer whether a computer warranty check has been run on the car.
- ✓ Use a commercially available computer search program.
- ✓ Ask to see the title documents and look to see if the mileage reading on the documents has been altered.
- ✓ When buying from an individual, look at the date the car's title was issued by the state. Be wary if the car is being sold immediately after the title was issued -- the new title could have been obtained to hide a mileage alteration on the old title.
- ✓ Look to see if the steering wheel was worn smooth. Look for other signs of excessive wear on the arm-rest, the floor mats, the pedals for the brakes and gas, and the area around the ignition. If these items were recently replaced, that could also indicate efforts to hide the car's true use and mileage.
- ✓ Have a mechanic check out the car.
- ✓ Insist that the seller fill out and sign the odometer information on the back of the title. This may help you in the future if there is a problem.